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Thomas Dunn, Artistic Director

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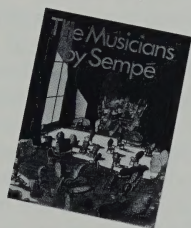
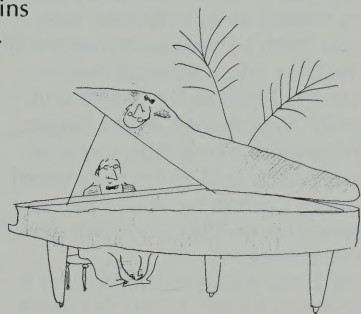
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THOMAS DUNN

Artistic Director Thomas Dunn has long since demonstrated that a conductor who releases a pack of beagles on the stage of Carnegie Hall can also win acclaim as a leading interpreter of the world's great music. Whether he performs the Leopold Mozart *Hunting Symphony* (hence the hounds!) or one of the Bach Passions, Mr. Dunn's reputation rests on the intensely personal (and frequently pacesetting!) musical involvement that he brings to every work.

Maestro Dunn has performed opera, ballet, puppet theatre, and a wide range of music for instrumental and vocal ensembles. His Bach series of 1961-62 at Carnegie Hall with the Festival Orchestra and Chorus of New York firmly established his stature as a conductor who could draw forth a lively combination of critical respect and audience enthusiasm. With the Festival Orchestra and Chorus, with New York's Cantata Singers, and with numerous ensembles around the nation, Maestro Dunn earned equal renown as an interpreter of the Baroque and Classic and of 19th and 20th century music as well.

Thomas Dunn came to the Handel & Haydn Society in 1967. Under his aegis, H&H found new strength in its choral repertoire. His historical versions of *Messiah* gave a fresh dimension to a Handel & Haydn tradition more than a century in the making. He has created a new image for the 170-year-old Society by introducing dance, theatre and orchestral works to the increasingly broad H&H repertoire. In addition to his leadership of H&H and to his guests conducting assignments around the nation, Maestro Dunn serves as Director of Choral Activities for Boston University.

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Wednesday, April 17, 1985 at 8 p.m.
Friday, April 19, 1985 at 8 p.m.

HANDEL & HAYDN SOCIETY
Thomas Dunn, Artistic Director

Johann Sebastian Bach

The Four Suites for Orchestra

Fenwick Smith, *flute*
Peggy Pearson, *oboe*
Barbara Knapp, *oboe*
Ronald Haroutunian, *bassoon*
John Schnell, *trumpet*
John Finney, *harpsichord*

Thomas Dunn, *conducting*

Suite I [BWV 1066]

Ouverture
Courante
Gavotte I-II
Forlane
Menuet I-II
Bourrée I-II
Passpied I-II

Suite III [BMV 1068]

Ouverture
Air
Gavotte I-II
Bourrée
Gigue

INTERMISSION

Suite II [BWV 1067]

Ouverture
Rondeau
Sarabande
Bourrée I-II
Polonaise
Menuet
Badinerie

Suite IV [BWV 1069]

Ouverture
Bourrée I-II
Gavotte
Menuet I-II
Réjouissance

We wish to thank the Massachusetts Council on the Arts & Humanities and the
National Endowment for the Arts for their continued support of the Handel & Haydn Society.

PROGRAM NOTES

by Joseph Dyer

Bach composed more than two hundred dances ranging in sophistication from luxuriously decorated sarabandes for keyboard to the little pieces he inserted in the family music albums. The list would be still longer if we included the dance-inspired arias and choruses of the cantatas. None of Bach's music was intended for actual dancing of course, but even stylized dance music implies a number of compositional restrictions. Form, meter, mood, length of each section and all the other conventional features which distinguish one dance from another had to be respected. Nevertheless, Bach rarely wrote a "generic" bourrée or gavotte; his dances have that individuality of character which makes each one memorable.

The concept of the suite as a prescribed order of dances, contrasting in mood and style but unified by a common key, developed by the middle of the seventeenth century. Though French harpsichordists and lutenists of the period were so preoccupied with the dance that they wrote almost nothing but dance music, German composers were the first to impose a coherent, cyclical order on the fragmented material. Bach benefited from his predecessors' experiments and achieved the ultimate sophistication in his chamber and keyboard suites. They include the six Partitas, the "French" and "English" Suites, the three partitas for solo violin, the six suites for unaccompanied cello and the three suites for lute (or lute-harpsichord, fitted with gut and metal strings to imitate the sound of the lute).

Bach's four orchestral suites stem from a different tradition, however. The chamber suite had stabilized with four standard dances—allemande, courante, sarabande, gigue—plus an optional prelude and dances of more recent origin. The German orchestral suite owes its principal debt to the ballets and *tragédies lyriques* of Jean-Baptiste Lully (1632-1687). Germany received its introduction to this genre from Georg Muffat, who published orchestral suites which were inspired (as he claimed) by "the lively sweetness which flows from the Lullian spring."

Whether or not Bach knew this music or read the informative prefaces which Muffat included in his collections, he under-

stood both the French idiom and the French-inspired orchestral suite. The orchestral suite depended upon the dances most popular on the French stage: bourrée, gavotte, sarabande and minuet. With the exception of the sarabande these were the newer, optional dances of the keyboard suite. Pieces with descriptive titles were also admitted, but they adopted the typical binary form of the dance. As usual, the number and choice of the dances depended on the composer. The four Bach orchestral suites have, respectively, 10, 8, 5 and 6 movements. Bach proved conservative with reference to pieces with evocative, descriptive titles. He included only a "badinerie" (chitchat) and "réjouissance" (rejoicing). The celebrated "air" from the third suite falls into this category, but has no descriptive title.

The influence of Lully is perceived most strongly in the specifically French overture, an essential component of the orchestral suite. Known in Germany at least by the time of Bach's birth, it was used frequently by Handel. (Such an overture precedes both Handel oratorios on the Society's concert schedule this year: *Messiah* and *Alexander's Feast*.) An atmosphere of pomp is created by the "jerky" rhythms and upward rushing scales of the opening section. This is followed by a section in quicker tempo which begins imitatively, but rarely maintains strict part writing. Bach, whose musical technique far transcended that of Lully, preserves the polyphonic fabric intact throughout. The typical broadening out at the final cadence is sometimes expanded to a special section which recalls the grandiose opening of the overture.

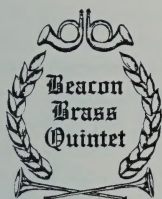
The dances of the Baroque suite encompass an international selection. The bourrée, which appears in every one of Bach's orchestral suites, is thought to have come from the Auvergne; one can almost see the dancers' leaps in Bach's melodies. Another country dance, the minuet, occurs in three of the suites. It attracted the attention of Louis XIV, whose fascination with its graceful choreography made it the courtly dance par excellence. The gavotte came from the Dauphine, while Brittany contributed the passepied. Though the gigue originated in England or Ireland, it masqueraded in either Italian or French guise in the Baroque suite. Bach chooses the rapidly flowing triplets of the Italian variety as the final dance of the third

suite. The saraband and the forlane were domesticated versions of wild folk dances from Mexico and Friuli (in northeastern Italy). Many of the dances could be treated *en rondeau*: the first dance of a similar pair repeated after the second.

The wealth of beautiful detail in these dances reveals a side of Bach that might otherwise have remained hidden. None of them puts even the briefest attention to test; the variety of unforgettable tunes set to superb accompaniments is inexhaustible. Karl Geiringer, an eminent Bach scholar and recipient of the 1983 Handel & Haydn medal, gave the finest expression to the effect of these delightful pieces: "Bach never overwhelms us with his stupendous mastery, but captivates us with grace and charm."

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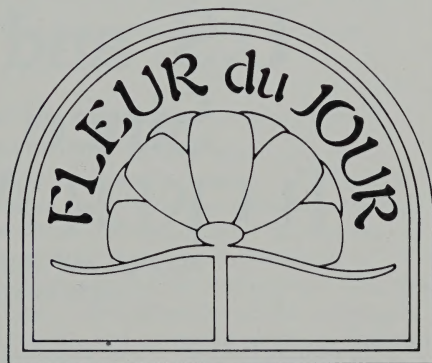
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Fenwick Smith

Oboe

Peggy Pearson
Barbara Knapp
Andrea Bonsignore

Bassoon

Ronald Haroutunian

Trumpet

John Schnell
Randell Croley
Thomas Cook

Timpani

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Harpsichord

John Finney

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SOLOISTS

Fenwick Smith, *flute*

Fenwick Smith received his education at the Eastman School of Music. He is a member of the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the Boston Musica Viva, and has recorded on the Nonesuch, Delos, and Northeastern labels. He has been very active as a recitalist and chamber musician, and is currently on the faculties of the Boston and New England conservatories. Mr. Smith also served as a flute maker for the Powell Flute Company.

Peggy Pearson, *oboe*

Peggy Pearson has earned an enviable reputation for her performances of a broad range of musical styles. She is solo oboist with the Emmanuel Chamber Orchestra—which has performed the complete cycle of Bach's sacred cantatas—and she is a member of the Emmanuel Wind Quintet (winner of 1981's prestigious Naumburg Award). Ms. Pearson performs with the Apple Hill Chamber Players, Musica Viva, and the contemporary music ensemble, Collage.

Barbara Knapp, *oboe*

An active free-lancer in and around Boston, oboist Barbara Knapp is a native of Baltimore, Maryland. A graduate of Peabody Conservatory and New England Conservatory, Ms. Knapp performs regularly with the Boston Concert Opera, Emmanuel Music, the New Hampshire Symphony, and the Cantata Singers. She teaches at the New School of Music and at the Belmont Music School.

Ronald Haroutunian, *bassoon*

Ronald Haroutunian attended New England Conservatory and Boston University, and studied with Matthew Ruggiero and Sherman Walt. Currently, Mr. Haroutunian performs regularly for Handel & Haydn, the Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra, and the Boston Ballet, as well as numerous chamber groups such as Alea III and the Harvard Chamber Orchestra. His solo appearances include the Mozart Bassoon Concerto for the Boston Pops, and numerous works with the Vermeer String Quartet.

John Schnell, *trumpet*

John Schnell studied trumpet at New England Conservatory with Armando Ghitalla. He has appeared as soloist and is principal trumpet for the Portland (ME) Symphony Orchestra, and has performed with the Boston Symphony and the Boston Pops. Mr. Schnell has been principal trumpet for the Handel & Haydn Society since 1980, and was most recently heard as soloist in the H&H Brandenburgs last November.

John Finney, *harpsichord*

John Finney studied organ and harpsichord at Oberlin College Conservatory and at the Boston Conservatory. He has performed as organist for the Boston Symphony, for New York's Waverly Consort and for the Smithsonian Chamber Players. Mr. Finney records for Nonesuch Records, and currently serves as Director of Music for the Wellesley Hills Congregational Church.

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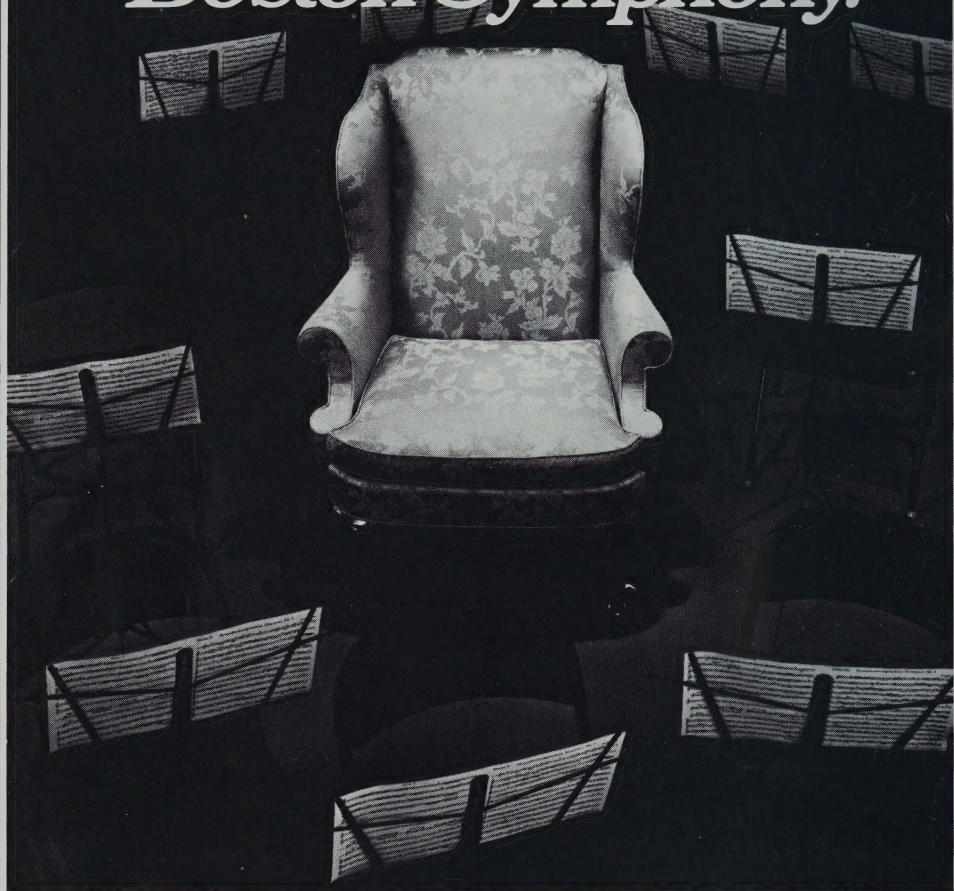
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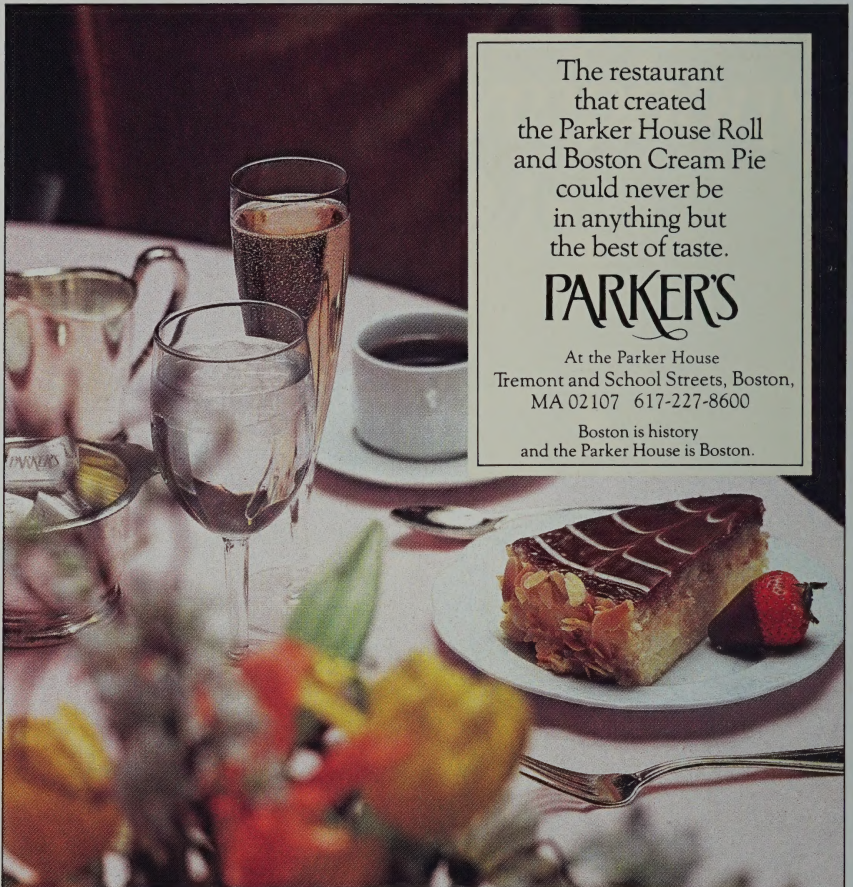
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